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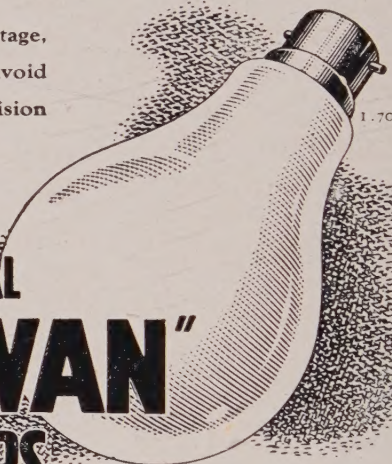
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Edited by Frances Stephens

March, 1946

EVENT of the month was the re-opening of the Opera House, Covent Garden, when some at least of London's pre-war glitter came back to the theatre. The Royal Family attended, and the theatre, looking magnificent with its multitudinous rose-coloured lights, boasted an audience as near pre-war looking as any since 1939. Indeed, it may be imagination, but since February 20th evening dress seems to have been on the increase in all the West End theatres. Perhaps the re-opening of the Opera House gave Londoners a timely jolt; we took to austerity without enthusiasm, but now we seem to loathe to part with it; though, true, if the moths have done their worst the problem is well nigh in-remountable.

The prestige of the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company is greatly enhanced as a result of their superb performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Incidentally, *Theatre World* has just published a *Guide to the Sadler's Wells Ballet*, with text by our ballet critic, Audrey Williamson. This unique publication contains notes on the history of ballet; the story of the Sadler's Wells Company and of each of the ballets in their repertoire; brief biographies of members of the company and a glossary of ballet terms. The book is lavishly illustrated, and the front cover is a beautiful study by Edward Landinian, the well known photographer, Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann. *The Haunted Ballroom*. The price is 1s. 1d. post free, and copies may be obtained from *Theatre World* offices.

During the past month there have been several steps in the direction of worthwhile drama in London. The organisation, Theatre '46," has taken the Scala

Over the Footlights

Theatre with the idea of establishing a repertory theatre in Central London to encourage new talent and new playwrights. The first production, on March 4th, will be a new play by Montagu Slater entitled *A Century for George*. The Unity Repertory Company has been launched on its professional career with O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. In this case the company is to be run on a co-operative basis, the players being paid a higher rate than the Equity minimum, with a bonus on box office takings and a family allowance. The plays are read by the whole company before selection.

The Travelling Repertory Theatre ("T.R.T."), under the direction of Basil C. Langton, opened at the Kings, Hammersmith, on March 1st, with *Romeo and Juliet*. Basil Langton is Romeo and Renée Asherson is Juliet, supported by Sir Lewis Casson, Alan Judd, W. E. Holloway, Frank Foster, Agnes Lauchlan and Esmond Knight.

Among other West End news is that a new revue called *Make it a Date* opens at the Duchess Theatre on March 20th. The leading parts are played by Max Wall, Marianne Davis, Leigh Stafford, Avril Angers, Charles Hawtrey and Terence Delaney. The book is by Ronald Jeans, Reginald Purdell, Nina Warner Hooke and others. This is the first production of Edmar Productions, who plan to present both musical and straight plays.

Plays recently opened in the West End which will be reviewed next month include *The Guinea-Pig*, Warren Chetham Strode's successful play at the Criterion, *Stage Door* at the Saville, *A Man About The House* at the Piccadilly, and *Dear Ruth* at the St. James's.

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New Shows of the Month

"Golden Eagle"—Westminster, January 29th.

"Gin Palace"—Gateway, January 29th.

"The Thrd Visitor"—Granville, January 30th.

"The Time of Your Life"—Lyric, Hammersmith, February 14th.

"Cymbeline"—Winter Garden, February 18th.

"Golden Eagle"

MR. Clifford Bax, whose *Rose Without a Thorn* was one of the finest historical plays the London stage has seen, completely failed to breathe life into his dramatisation of events in the life of Mary, Queen of Scots. No-one could argue that the events in question are not highly dramatic, and was there ever a more theatric figure in history than the ill-fated Mary? The author made of Henry VIII a living, pulsating and powerfully human personality, and we were justified in expecting an outstanding dramatic occasion in *Golden Eagle*. The disappointment was accordingly all the greater.

There was an air of careful authenticity it is true, but some of the passages between Mary and Bothwell struck a false note; the somewhat academic proceedings descended almost to musical comedy in the rose-throwing scene when the Queen finally decided to throw in her lot with her gaoler-lover.

The production was lavish, as the pictures on page 8 demonstrate, and the acting for the most part on a high level. Claire Luce, playing Mary and with a French accent, did her utmost with a role not strictly her metier. John Byron was brilliant as Rizzio, and Arthur Wontner's suave Lethington was a real triumph.

F.S.

"Gin Palace"

GIN PALACE, by Mr. Hurford Janes, is a colourful period piece, containing about seventeen variegated character parts and one "no-character" part—the juvenile lead—a veritable lamb among wolves. The lamb is rather poorly served by the author but Anthony Pendrell kept him alive. The story is credible enough and very, very sad but deliciously funny to watch in action. The gin palace of the play is regarded by all as a source of blessing to the district and Mrs. Justice, its proprietress, is treated with the reverence due to a benevolent despot. Her good plans come to nought by reason of the generally detrimental conduct of her grandson and heir. Vice, however, enjoys a spurious triumph, owing to the scarcity of virtue among the other charac-

ters; we know that the villain is destined to father another man's child.

The characterisation is rich. Several persons are introduced who merely serve to create atmosphere, but what atmosphere they create. One believes in them completely. It is impossible to over-praise the acting. Doris Wellings' landlady, Beatrice Kane's barmaid, Ferdie Mayne's bookie, David Burney's cadding toper and Peter Sturgess' potman presented something approaching a sublimation of their real life originals of fifty years ago.

Several more new plays are announced for presentation during the next three months. H.G.M.

"The Third Visitor"

ELLEN POLLOCK made a welcome return to the Granville Theatre in *The Third Visitor*, a new murder play by Gerald Anstruther, which was cordially received by a well-filled house. The play is full of surprises and the events are supposed to take place five years hence, the motive actuating one of the principal characters being revenge for humiliation and suffering in a Nazi concentration camp. As for England, the scene of events, little or nothing seems to have changed, either because the author takes a cynical view of planning or is unwilling to take risks on the skiddy roads of prophecy. The sinister Nazi who has survived and flourished under many aliases was powerfully played by Michael Golden. Ellen Pollock, who also produced, made a fascinating study of the woman whose bitter memories impel her to play Nemesis to the Nazi. Marjorie Mars brightened the scene and toughened the plot and the comic relief was richly dispensed by Mackenzie Ward.

This theatre announces an important revival of the late Sir James Barrie's *Marv Rose* for February 25th. H.G.M.

"The Time of Your Life"

IT should be a satisfaction to the curious to witness this sample of the work of Mr. Saroyan, whose name as a writer is well known in this country. Can this be the American way of life? It is San Francisco in October, 1939. A sedentary, pseudo-philosophic loafer (Walter Crisham) is discovered in a waterfront "honky-tonk," owned by one Nick (Frederick Valk), living on champagne paid for with easy money. A Teddy-bear kind of man of good appearance and no intelligence (Arthur Sager) runs for him simple and unnecessary errands. There enters a girl with ample oomph and no capacity for useful employment (Margaret Johnson). Both loafers fall

sincerely in love with this simple, available female. Loafer No. 1 plays Providence and spends money to build up a sentimental affection between the girl and Loafer No. 2. All characters in this play have hearts of gold, save only Blick, who represents Law and Order in terms of Interference with girls found in honky-tonks, and is vast and ogreish and quite unpleasant (Danny Green).

The play seems to stand still for a long time despite many diversions created by extra characters too numerous to mention, who all have to work very hard, but at the end Blick is shot off-stage by a reminiscing backwoodsman whom he had previously beaten up (George Pembroke). The girl goes off on a truck in a party dress with Loafer No. 2 and Loafer No. 1 makes a slow and sentimental exit solus. The high spot of the evening was the incursion of an anonymous drunk. For this no marks can be allowed to the author. The play makes heavy demands on a large and talented cast and is brilliantly produced by Peter Glenville. Certainly a play to be seen; one could hardly read it. H.G.M.

"Cymbeline"

RARELY do we get an opportunity of witnessing this play and Donald Wolfitt considerably increases our debt to him by his inclusion of *Cymbeline* in the present season. This is the play that contains two of Shakespeare's most admired songs, "Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings," and "Fear no more the heat o' the

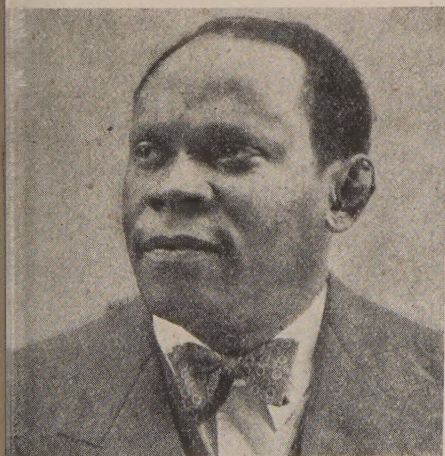


20th Century

sun," but they appear to the reader as sparks struck from a small and dullish anvil and in performance little can be made of them. The strong contrast between a cold and primitive Britain and a warm and luxurious Italy is completely established in this production, which is quite straightforward and innocent of fuss.

The story of faithful Imogen is allowed to unfold itself in the speaking of the lines. Why are heroines like Imogen so faithful? Perhaps because humanity around is so ignoble that they feel no impulse to be other than faithful to their own ideals. This is one of Shakespeare's longest female parts and it must be extremely difficult to project this gentle and affectionate character across a large theatre. Oh, for a small Elizabethan theatre for the performance of these plays! Rosalind Iden succeeded in enabling us to hear the words, whilst appearing to be Shakespeare's shy and virtuous young princess beset by cads. The glitteringly evil Italian Iachimo, being played by Donald Wolfitt, seemed to appear too infrequently and the Boccaccio trunk scene, Iachimo's own, was perhaps the best thing in the play.

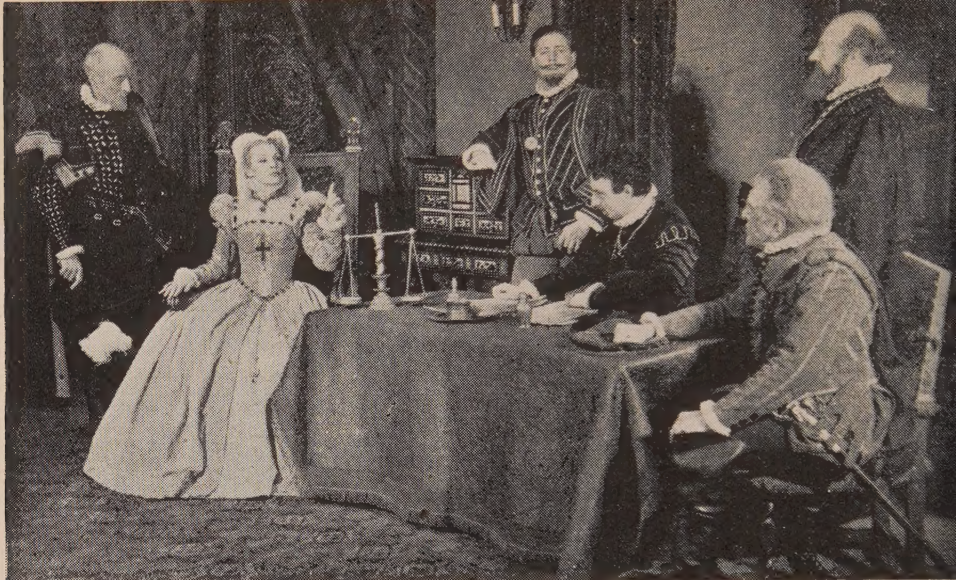
H.G.M.



ROBERT ADAMS

appearing with Ida Shepley in Eugene O'Neil's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, the first production of the new Unity Theatre's Professional Repertory, which will be reviewed next month.

We hope to include a full review of the other plays in Donald Wolfitt's season at the Winter Garden, in which Mr. Wolfitt is repeating his brilliant performances in *Hamlet* and *King Lear* among others, in a later issue. Meantime, with his greatly strengthened company, Mr. Wolfitt will enact for the first time in his career the part of Iago for two special performances on April 2nd and 12th, when the role of Othello will be played by Frederick Valk. The season is being extended to April 13th, and *Macbeth* is to be added to the repertoire after March 16th.



The Queen explains to her Counsellors that Philip of Spain might well tip the balance against Elizabeth of England—if necessary. *L. to R.:* Lethington (Arthur Wentner), The Queen (Claire Luce), Murray (Harry Fine), Rizzio (John Byron), Morton (David Horne) and Ruthven (Townsend Whitling).

“Golden Eagle”

Scenes from Clifford Bax's new play which finished its run at the Westminster on March 2nd.



CLAIRE LUCE
as Mary Queen of Scots.

PICTURES BY SWARBRICK STUDIOS



The battle scene on the summit of Carberry Hill. The Queen argues with Bothwell, who sees no sense in offering further resistance. (Torrin Thatcher as Bothwell).

"The Sleeping Beauty"

By AUDREY WILLIAMSON

THE reopening of Covent Garden Opera House on February 20th with a performance of Tchaikowsky's *The Sleeping Beauty* by the Sadler's Wells Ballet crowned fifteen years' fine and increasing achievement by this company under the direction of Ninette de Valois. With the appearance at a theatre of great ballet traditions English ballet has come to a full and splendid maturity, and the effect on the dancers was apparent in a performance which surpassed in classical breadth, vitality and finish any I have yet seen given by this company.

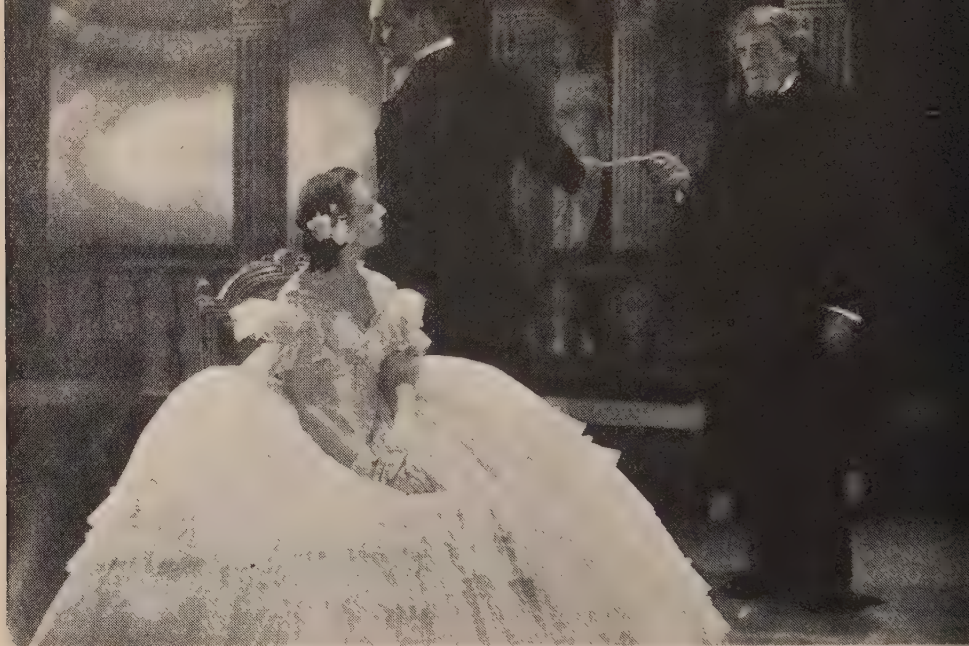
It is significant of the basic policy of this company that the management chose to mark this great occasion in its history by a performance of a Russian classical ballet and not of ballets representing its own considerable choreographic achievement. Always recognising the importance of the classical tradition as a foundation stone of modern dancing and choreography, Miss de Valois in this production was able to show the remarkably high technical level the dancers have now reached, and through them the full justification of her policy. This was not only a brilliant and exciting occasion in itself, it was a herald of the achievement that may be expected of English dancers in their own creative ballets in the future. For "in order to dance the new ballets successfully," as Pavlova has said, "it is indispensable to have passed through a school of classical dancing."

It is the choreography of Petipa above all that represents the classical dance in its most refined expression. The construction of his great 4-act ballets, with their scenes of pure *divertissement* alternating with passages of mime, may be outmoded by modern standards of ballet creation, but their emphasis on visual qualities of line and grace and virtuosity of movement remain unequalled, a necessary education for dancers, choreographers and audience alike. In corps-de-ballet arrangement, though excellently inventive at his best, he had his moments when routine outpaced inspiration, and even in Russia it is customary to rearrange certain dances from time to time. The Diaghileff production in London of *The Sleeping Princess* (a title also adopted by Sadler's Wells in earlier performances) went further still and introduced some of the poorer musical numbers from *Casse Noisette*; a practice I dislike as it damages the consistency of style of what is, perhaps, the finest and most prolific melody of Tchaikowsky's ballet scores. There is therefore full precedent for the re-choreographing of the Waltz by Frederick Ashton for this production, and he has done this with great charm and inventiveness. The

arrangements in the last act seem to me less happy. As in the Diaghileff version the Diamond, Gold, Silver and Sapphire Fairies are replaced by the number "Florestan and his Sisters," again choreographed by Ashton but, apart from the variation excellently danced by Moira Shearer on the First Night, not as well as in the case of the Waltz. Gerd Larsen danced her variation with precise and sparkling classic style, but the male solo (Michael Somes) is weak and not well performed, which in view of the fact that it is the first (and apart from the Blue Bird the only) example of English male classical dancing in the ballet is unfortunate. The heaviest share of classical dancing in this act now falls to this trio, the Prince's solo and classical Coda having been dropped from the arrangements for Aurora and the Prince, and the character dance of the Three Ivans substituted between the great Adagio and Aurora's solo: an odd arrangement that badly breaks the classical sequence and gives us less than our share of the finest classical dancers in the last scene. The overwhelming reception given on the First Night to the Pas de Deux, performed by Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann with magnificent classic *brio*, as compared to a rather lukewarm response to some other items, supports this criticism and as soon as it becomes feasible one hopes the company will revert to the original classical arrangement.

There is one lapse from the highest standard of classic style among the six leading Fairies, and I should like to see more uniformity of head and arm position among the corps-de-ballet, which danced extremely well. Otherwise one cannot praise too highly the general level of the performance, made memorable by Margot Fonteyn's splendid readjustment of personality and style to suit the magnitude of stage and auditorium. Always an enchanting Aurora, she has, I think, never danced with such radiant control and beauty, and combined ease, grace and speed of movement with such breathtaking balance and extension of "line." She has, moreover, a full sense of the character in all its phases; light and gay as morning sunlight in the first act, she has in the Vision Scene something of the elusive shimmer of stars reflected in moving water, and attains in the last the shining nobility and spaciousness of movement of the true ballet Princess. This is a great ballerina performance by any standards. She is finely supported by Robert Helpmann, who mimes the Prince with his incomparable sensitivity and clarity of gesture, and on the First Night played the Wicked Fairy, Carabosse, with malevolent

(Continued on page 36)



Song of Norway. Father Nordraak brings news that his son, Grieg's great friend, is dead. Nina Hagerup (Halina Victoria), Edvard Grieg (John Hargreaves) and Father Nordraak (Charles Doran) in a scene from Emile Littler's presentation of *Song of Norway*, which comes to the Palace on March 7th.

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PETER PEARS as Peter Grimes, and JOAN CROSS as Ellen Orford, the Borough Schoolmistress. Ellen is seen persuading Grimes that she will help him to live down the enmity and suspicion of the Borough, following the inquiry into the death of his boy apprentice.

Sadler's Wells Opera

AT SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE

THE present long season of opera at Sadler's Wells Theatre has been marked by tremendous enthusiasm in the audiences. Indeed, we begin to feel that the criticism levelled against us of not being an opera loving country can no longer be justified, and that as far as performance goes the Sadler's Wells Opera can indeed hold fair to rival continental opera, which, being for the most part State run, has had in the past tremendous financial advantages over the English counterpart.

What has emerged with added certainty this season is the fact that Benjamin Britten's opera, *Peter Grimes*, is a work of the greatest importance. This opera has already attained an international reputation, and the first night in the present season proved to be an even greater event

than June 7th, which saw its premiere performance. There have been many opinions about *Peter Grimes*, which is based on Crabbe's poem of the Suffolk fisherman who caused a scandal in "The Borough" because of his sadistic treatment of his apprentices, but no-one can deny the tremendous strength of the piece and the haunting quality of the music. There is scope for fine acting as well as singing, and the company have risen to the occasion magnificently on both counts.

In addition to *The Bartered Bride* and *Madam Butterfly*, pictured with *Peter Grimes* in the following pages, *La Boheme*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Rigoletto*, and *The Barber of Seville* are included in the repertoire. On March 26th, Vaughan Williams' opera *Sir John In Love* will be added, with Roderick Jones as Falstaff.

PICTURES BY ANGUS McBEAN



Above:

The prologue of *Peter Grimes*. Grimes, in the witness box, is cross-examined by Swallow, the magistrate, about the death of his boy apprentice. The picture includes OWEN BRANNIGAN as Swallow and, *extreme right*, VALETTA IACOPI as Mrs. Sedley, the village gossip.

Below:

The fishing folk of the Borough are seen drawing in the nets at the beginning of the working day, watched by magistrate Swallow (*centre*); Ned Keene, the apothecary, and other local characters.



Mrs. Sedley, the village gossip, asks Ned Keene, the apothecary (Edmund Donnelly), about her supply of laudanum pills.



Left:

Inside the Boar Inn. Peter Grimes takes his new boy apprentice, who has just arrived from a neighbouring town, away to his lonely hut on the cliff edge, watched with suspicion by the villagers.

Right:

The scene later, when Ellen Torford, alone with Peter Grimes' new apprentice, begins to realise that Grimes is ill-treating the boy. In the background is heard singing from the interior of the village church. (Leonard Thompson as the boy).



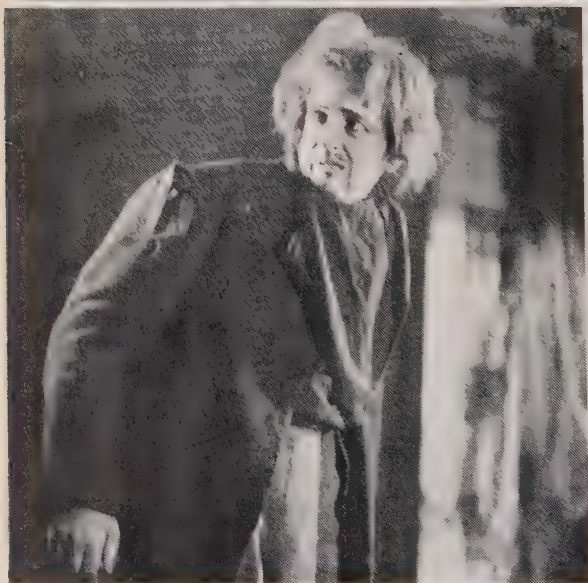
Right: Peter Grimes and his apprentice, in Grimes' lonely house on the cliff edge. Grimes, who hears the villagers approaching, tells the boy that a record catch awaits them and they must put out to sea immediately.

Below: The villagers, who have raised a hue and cry after Peter Grimes, whom they suspect of cruelty towards his new apprentice, arrive at Grimes' hut to find everything in order and no sign of Grimes or the boy.



Left:

Owen Brannigan as lawyer Swallow, Edmund Donlevy as Ned Keene, the apothecary, Rodgerick Jones as Balstrode and Tom Culbert as the Rector.



The apprentice has accidentally fallen to his death and the hunted Grimes, realising that the villagers would never believe that the boy's death was an accident, puts out to sea in his boat and drowns himself



The Circus scene in *The Bartered Bride*, one of the most popular operas in the repertoire.



The Bartered Bride

Left: A scene from Act II. Below left, Arthur Servent as Jenik and Rose Hill as Marenka, and below, Ludmilla (Olwen Price), Krushina (Gilbert Bailey), and Kecal, studying the contract. The costumes are designed by Reece Pember-ton and the opera produced by Eric Crozier.



Scenes by Pictorial Press



“Madam Butterfly”

Left:

VICTORIA SLADEN

as Madam Butterfly. Miss Sladen also appears with great success as Mimi in *La Bohème* and Marenka in *The Bartered Bride*.

Below:

The arrival of the Bonze. A dramatic moment from the first act. Victoria Sladen is seen in the foreground as Cho Cho San.





Above: A scene from the first act. Pinkerton inspects the marriage lines.

Below: Two other moments from this popular opera, showing Victoria Sladen as Cho Cho San, Roderick Jones as Sharpless, and Valetta Iacopi as Suzuki.



Right :

**RODERICK
JONES**

Balstrode in *Peter
Grimes*; Marcel in
La Boheme and
the name part of
Rigoletto.

Right Centre :

ROSE HILL

Marenka in *The
Bartered Bride*
and Susanna in
*The Marriage of
Figaro*.



ELIZABETH ABERCROMBIE
Mimi, and The Countess in *The
Marriage of Figaro*.



JAMES JOHNSTON
Pinkerton in *Madam Butterfly*;
the Duke in *Rigoletto* and Jenik
in *The Bartered Bride*.



MORGAN JONES
Bob Boles in *Peter Grimes*,
Vasek in *The Bartered Br*

L-R.

IVOR EVANS

Kecal in *The Bartered Bride*,
and the Barber in *The Barber
of Seville*.

HOWELL GLYNNE

CATHERINE LAWSON

Maddalena; Aunty in *Peter
Grimes*, and Susuki in *Madam
Butterfly*.

JOHN DETHICK

Colline in *La Boheme*; Tobias
Micha in *The Bartered Bride*.

VERA TERRY

Gilda in *Rigoletto*.



Some Leading Members



Left Centre:
VALETTA
IACOPI
Mrs. Sedley in
Peter Grimes; The
Witch in *Hansel*
and *Gretel* and
Maddalena in
Rigoletto.

Left:
LINDA PARKER
Mimi in *La*
Boheme; Gilda in
Rigoletto and
Marenka in *The*
Bartered Bride.

Portraits by John Vickers



ANNA POLLAK
sings in *Madam Butterfly*
and *The Bartered Bride*.



TOM CULBERT
in *La Boheme*, *Rigoletto* and
Peter Grimes.



MINNIE BOWER
Marenka in *The Bartered Bride*
and the Niece in *Peter Grimes*.

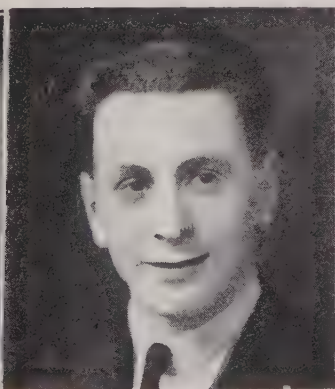


Photo : Yates and Henderson

Photo : Antoine Kershaw

Sadler's Wells Opera



The Rivals

- The recent revival of Sheridan's comedy at the Criterion Theatre was a triumph of stage direction and design, and many readers have asked for a few scenes from the play. These we hope will give some idea of an exquisite production in which Oliver Messel's floor achieved an astonishing spaciousness, considering the smallness of the stage. Tyrone Guthrie also gave invaluable help, lighting and directing the play, together with William Armstrong and Edith Evans. This production was also notable for the superb rendering of Mr. Malaprop by Edith Evans, who is seen in the picture above. (Picture by *Picture Post*.)

Picture Post



Another delightful glimpse of eighteenth century Bath, with Pamina Jameson as Lucy and Michael Cook as Fog. (Picture by *Picture Post*.)

The Rivals''



How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him.

Key Fildes as Lydia Languish and Anthony Mayle as Jack Absolute, in Act II, Scene 2.



Julia: Oh! You torture me to the heart. I cannot bear it.

Jean Wilson as Julia and Peter Cushing as Faulkland, in Act II, Scene 1.

Pictures by Houston Rogers



colourful moment from Act III, Scene 4. Included in the picture are Morland Graham as Sir Anthony Absolute, Charles Lamb as David, Bfrefni O'Rourke as Sir Lucius O'Trigger and Reginald Beckwith as Bob Acres.



The Good Fairies, the Seasons of the Year, endow Cinderella with their blessings. In this scene the Fairy Spring showers Cinderella (Ulanova) with flowers. A moment from Sergei Prokofiev's new ballet. Further scenes appear on the page facing. (Picture by G. Petrusor)

Cinderella—New Soviet Ballet

by
NIKOLAI VOLKOV

Soviet ballet has been enriched by another important work. Sergei Prokofiev's "Cinderella," which is being staged at the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre, may be placed among the outstanding successes of Soviet and world ballet. It was the dramatist Nikolai Volkov who suggested to the composer the subject of the old story of "Cinderella," undertaking to write the text himself. We give below what Volkov himself has to say:—

"IT began 120 years ago. In January, 1825, at the opening of the Bolshoi Theatre, a big pantomime ballet *Cinderella*, with a variety of magical transformations, was given after a prologue entitled *The Triumph of the Muse*. The subject was not new to Russian musical theatres. Before that time it had been performed as an opera with music by Steibelt, and at a later period as an opera with music by the famous Rossini. Many of our theatre historians recalled that old ballet of "Cinderella" when in November, 1945, Sergei Prokofiev's new ballet with my libretto was staged at the Bolshoi Theatre.

"As a dramatist of the ballet, I was charmed by the poetry the theme of *Cinderella* offered. My problem was what literary version to take as the basis of the new libretto. Perrault's beautiful story, the version of the Brothers Grimm, or some other fairy tale source? There is no lack of these versions among many nations. For instance, the English literary scholar M. Cox, in a work on *Cinderella* (published

in 1893), enumerated 130 versions of this story. More than half a century has passed, and in that time many more texts have become known to scholars of folklore.

"I decided the most suitable for the ballet was perhaps Perrault's. It was on Perrault's version of the story that Tchaikovsky wrote his well-known ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*. But it seemed to me that a simple adaptation of Perrault's text was too restricting for creative work. Let it be, I said to myself, as Perrault and other story-tellers have it—the account of how the poor girl went to a ball in a palace in wonderful clothes; let her lose her glass slipper and marry her prince as a happy ending. But this was only the thematic canvas, and on this I had a fancy to weave a more poetic pattern.

"In the first place, new images of the prince and the drudge rose before my eyes: the prince acquired the features of a passionate and impetuous youth who longed to escape from the confining influence of the stagnant Court life. I wrote a libretto depicting the prince's entry at the ball as "the prince takes his place on the throne as though he were getting into his saddle," and this comparison subsequently found its expression in Prokofiev's music. In our imagination Cinderella was shrouded in the mists of dreams, a girl who lived on the foretaste of love. The result of this interpretation of the chief characters was that the ballet acquired the features of a love story. The fairy tale, while pre-

(Continued on page 32)



Scene from the Second Act: the Ball in the Prince's Palace.



The whole of the Third Act of the Ballet is devoted to the Prince's search for Cinderella all over the world. In this picture the Prince is in Andalusia.



Another scene from the Third Act. A wild dance in a Southern Island.

(Pictures by G. Petrusov, Moscow)



ALEC CLUNES

as Hamlet. Mr. Clunes also played the part of Sir Harry Wildair in *The Constant Couple* and Charles Surface in *The School for Scandal*.

Festival of English Drama at the Arts

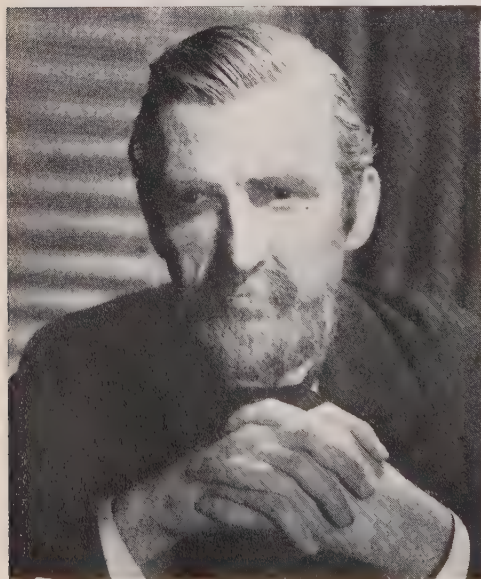
● The Festival of English Drama now running at the Arts Theatre, has proved to be the biggest success this theatre has had since it came under the direction of Alec Clunes in 1942.

Highlight of the Festival, which consisted of five plays from Shakespeare to Shaw, was Alec Clunes' *Hamlet*, produced by Judith Furse, sister of Roger Furse, the stage designer. This was the first time Shakespeare's great tragedy had been produced in London by a woman since 1890. Directed by Michael Warre, clever young actor-designer, and Prince Hal in the Old Vic's *Henry IV*.

George Farquhar's Restoration comedy, *The Constant Couple*, so successful in the Arts Festival of English Comedy two years ago, was again a firm favourite.

The Eighteenth Century Sheridan comedy, *The School for Scandal*, produced by Christopher Fry, Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's study of Edwardian middle-class morality, *The Thunderbolt*, and Shaw's amusing matrimonial disquisition, *Getting Married*, completed the cycle. This Festival terminates on March 10th, and *Hamlet* will be played at every performance for the last two weeks, by which time some 64,850 people will have seen the play.

In addition to those featured in these pages leading members of the company are Dorothy Primrose, who appeared as Ophelia, Angelica Maria and Leo; Dorothy Reynolds, who played the parts of Lady Sneerwell, Lesbia and Phyll Mortimore; Derek Burch, who appeared as Horatio; Joseph Surface and Colonel Standard; and Alla McClelland, appearing as Laertes, Clincher Senior and St. John Hotchkiss.



MARK DIGNAM

as James Mortimore in *The Thunderbolt*. His other parts were The Bishop in *Getting Married* and Claudius in *Hamlet*.

Portraits by Angus McBean



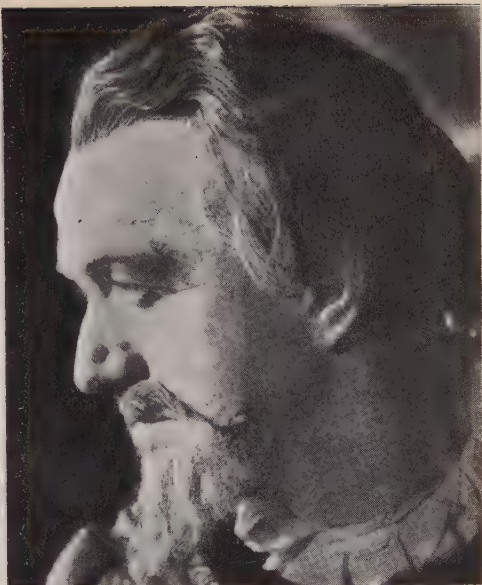
MARGARET VINES

as Lady Teazle in *The School for Scandal*. Her other parts were Lurewell in *The Constant Couple* and Helen Thornhill in *The Thunderbolt*.



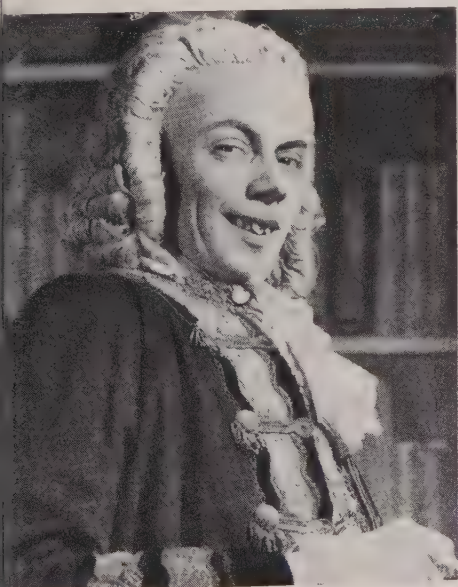
OLGA LINDO

Mrs. George in *Getting Married*. Miss Lindo played Gertrude in *Hamlet* and Rose Ponting in *The Thunderbolt*.



ROY MALCOLM

as Polonius in *Hamlet*. Mr. Malcolm's other parts were Reginald in *Getting Married* and Thaddeus Mortimore in *The Thunderbolt*.



PETER STREULI

Sir Oliver Surface in *The School for Scandal*. appeared also as the Ghost in *Hamlet* and Denyer in *The Thunderbolt*, which he also produced.



BERTRAM SHUTTLEWORTH

who is seen here as Moses in *The School for Scandal*, also played Guildenstern in *Hamlet*, Tom Errand in *The Constant Couple* and Mr. Elkin in *The Thunderbolt*.

Portraits by Angus McBean



Portrait by Basil Shackleton

Wendy Hiller

- An unusual new portrait of Wendy Hiller, who has added immeasurably to her stature as an actress of deep insight and sensitivity with her portrayal of the ill-fated Princess Charlotte in Henry Sherek's presentation of *The First Gentleman*, at the Savoy Theatre.

Right: Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt in the American production of Terence Rattigan's play—now called *O Mistress Mine*.

THE LUNTS are back again and Broadway is bewitched again with their gaiety and glamour. We have been so starved for them that we are grateful to Terence Rattigan for conjuring up a vehicle as flexible as *O Mistress Mine*—your *Love in Idleness*—which allows them to romp and regale us in their most sparkling sophisticated style.

Picking up the curtain on Miss Fontanne and Mr. Lunt living in sin, this time they are domesticated kind, and going on to catch Mr. Lunt against a seventeen year old rival, her son, is certainly a sound basis for an evening of theatrical enjoyment. Mr. Rattigan has been pretty generous with his wit and situations in embellishing this idea and luckily when his talent does falter the Lunts' genius is there to dazzle away the dull spot. Together they turn it into a treat to captivate playgoers in any country.

Finding oneself in an opus with the Lunts and in a part almost equal to theirs in size and importance, must be a terrifying prospect for any player, for the challenge imposed—to equal this superb team—virtually insurmountable. Young Dick Van Patten, an actor with quite a few stage appearances for his tender years, found himself in just such a position when he won the part of the son and deserves the encouraging notices he has received for his brilliant struggle. He is an average American and does not have the stature or authority for his "Hamlet-like" role, and we fear



Echoes from Broadway

BY OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT E. MAWBY GREEN

guesses some of Mr. Rattigan's intent and British humour. This is, of course, disconcerting at the start, but once you accustom yourself to this young American's way of achieving his effects, things begin to move in a delightful fashion under Mr. Lunt's fluid direction.

Ann Lee has an effective bit as Mr. Lunt's strangled wife and flaunts just about the lightest hat that has been seen on any stage, while Margery Maude is the respectable maid, Polton. The settings have been designed by Robert Davison, which seem to be fairly faithful duplications of those of the London production, and Molyneux has draped Miss Fontanne in lovely flowing gowns.

O Mistress Mine has been presented by the Theatre Guild and John C. Wilson and will run over here as long as the Lunts feel like fooling in it.

A new play by S. N. Behrman is always an eagerly awaited event. His first play without a collaborator, *The Second Man*, produced almost twenty years ago by the Theatre Guild and starring Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, revealed a full grown comic talent. He solidified his position as America's foremost writer of comedy with *Brief Moment* and *Biography*. In these plays reason and intelligence always triumphed over emotion. The right to maintain a detached point of view was steadfastly upheld. But as we inched on to World War II a man of Mr. Behrman's deep sensibilities found it expedient to discuss in his drawing rooms the host of evils that fascism in its many forms was capable of inflicting. One could not discuss this sickness that was threatening the world without emotion and Mr. Behrman's plays, *Wine of Choice*, *Rain*

(Continued overleaf)

from *Heaven* and *The Talley Method* took him further and further from "pure comedy" until the world reached such a sorry state that he wondered whether he, as a comic writer, dare continue to function. This question he posed in the rather tepid "problem play," *No Time for Comedy*. During the war he collaborated with Franz Werfel and wrote that "comedy about a tragedy," *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, and now the Theatre Guild has produced (and recently removed from the boards after 38 performances) his first play—since victory *Dunnigan's Daughter*.

The post-war world is still weighed down with forces of evil, and Mr. Behrman cannot return to his position as impartial spectator. In *Dunnigan's Daughter* he turns his searching mind on Clay Rainier (Dennis King), a cynical millionaire businessman with an insatiable lust for power and nothing but contempt for human rights and justice, and his third wife, Ferne, Dunnigan's daughter (June Havoc), another of his acquisitions. It is her struggle to free herself from him and regain her personal freedom that dominates the play. This she accomplishes with the aid of a bright young man from the State Department (Richard Widmark) when she sees strength in his humanity and idealism as opposed to the strength she once felt in her husband's realistic ruthlessness.

Mr. Behrman's generally flawless deportment in a drawing room and his ability to provide an evening of often brilliant talk is not always apparent in *Dunnigan's Daughter*. His cliches far outnumber and linger longer than his illuminating truths. And he has tossed in two of the oldest situations imaginable to oil his plot—situations you would have thought Mr. Behrman incapable of using: To help illustrate Rainier's utter ruthlessness and to bring the State Department on the scene he has Rainier cut off the water supply on some poor Mexican farmers, and to supply the external reason for Ferne to leave her husband he has her discover that Rainier was involved in sending her father to prison.

Dennis King is particularly effective as the complex Rainier, drawing the man's many qualities; charm, taste, egotism, possessiveness, power and fear, into a compelling portrait. For the title role the Theatre Guild first hoped to snare Katharine Hepburn, then turned to Geraldine Fitzgerald, opened out-of-town with Virginia Gilmore, and finally brought June Havoc to New York. Miss Havoc, in a sea of Mr. Behrman's urbane and polished phrases, is in way over her head and every time she gets an "oldie" like: "Let's call it a day" she grabs at it fiercely with a sigh of relief, turns it into a "big moment" and only reluctantly gives it up. In the supporting cast Luther Adler as a Mexican

artist "on the make" for Ferne and Richard Widmark as the boy who gets her are good. Stewart Chaney's drawing room in Mexico is handsome. It has been announced that Peter Daubeny has purchased the British rights for an early London production.

Again the Theatre Guild. This time they have started a Shakespearean Company, their first offering being *The Winter's Tale*. This work has not been seen in New York for about 35 years and after viewing it, everybody was eager to point out that now they knew why—for it is dull, badly constructed and unmoving, whether the author be Shakespeare or not. However, many theatregoers and critics have expressed gratitude for this opportunity to see the play—gratitude, we suppose, for being convinced it's just as bad on the stage as they thought it was in the library.

Nevertheless, the Guild has given *The Winter's Tale* almost every opportunity to prove itself. They have brought out a highly competent cast by Broadway standards, got lots of costumes and settings by Stewart Chaney and judiciously pruned the play of much of its dead wood. But it doesn't help. The author let them down.

Henry Daniell is burdened with the unbelievable role of Leontes, King of Sicilia, who, for no apparent reason, accuses his Queen of infidelity. The part is one dimensional and Mr. Daniell's limited vocal range and subsequent monotonous delivery does not improve matters. Jessie Royce Landis is more successful as the accused Queen Hermione, bringing to the part a quiet and delicate dignity. However, that very actress actress, Florence Reed, as Paulina, Hermione's loyal defender, knows she's in a play by Shakespeare and tears into her role in the grand old manner, even though nobody else on stage wants to play her way. She serves her purpose, just like the slamming of a door in a farce, waking you up every time you start nodding.

After the stark melodrama of the first half, we go pastoral, advance sixteen years and look in on the shepherds and clowns who have brought up the King's daughter, banished as a babe when he jealously suspected she had been sired by his former friend, the King of Bohemia. Primarily involved in these proceedings are Whitford Kane, Romney Brent and Kurt Richards, and they are as good as Shakespearean clowns and shepherds can be. The direction entrusted to B. Iden Payne and Romney Brent is of a type commonly called le'surely.

Before *The Winter's Tale* opened here, the Theatre Guild was asked what play their Shakespearean Company would do next. This, they replied, depended entirely on the critics' and public's reaction to their first venture. The reviewers approved with reser-

(Continued on page 30)

Made-to-Measure Roles by ERIC JOHNS

IVOR NOVELLO is in the very happy position of a successful dramatist resting on his oars. Since *Perchance to Dream* was staged at the Hippodrome last April it has been seen by well over 400,000 people. Not only has every seat been sold at every performance, but all available standing room has been occupied and people have been turned away every night, without exception.

Knowing how far ahead Mr. Novello starts to plan successors to his successes, I dipped into his dressing room during a wait the other night in the hope of gleaning some idea of things to come. I was disappointed. I came away without news. It looks as if the present show will run for about two years, and it transpired that Mr. Novello has no more idea than I had



IVOR NOVELLO

about his next production. As he frequently writes plays for individual stars, I wondered if anyone's work had recently impressed him sufficiently to start him drafting a new play.

"I have nearly always had favourite artists in mind when writing my plays," admitted Mr. Novello. "If an author admires the work of a certain actress and as her capabilities in view as he constructs his play, I think he writes what is best for her, and produces a part she can play to her advantage. Her presence continually at the back of his mind helps him to write the play, and to produce feasible lines which will fall from her lips with complete conviction.

In the days before my musical plays I wrote *Murder in Mayfair* for Fay Compton and myself. At the time I had no idea Lina Best would play Auriol Crannock. It

was a gamble of casting-against-type, which proved an enormous success. *Proscenium* was another play written for Fay Compton and myself, yet one of the most effective performances was given by Zena Dare as my mother, though no definite actress was in my mind as I wrote the part. *Fresh Fields* was written for Lilian Braithwaite and Marie Tempest. When the play was finished Marie Tempest did not feel too happy about her part; she did not quite see herself in it, so Ellis Jeffreys played it and made one of the most memorable successes of her brilliant career in comedy.

"When I turned to musical shows Mary Ellis was my inspiration. *Glamorous Night*, *The Dancing Years* and *Arc de Triomphe* were all written for her. What an artist! She has sung in opera at the Metropolitan, New York; she was the original Rose-Marie; and she has played such magnificent 'legitimate' parts as Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Nina Leeds in *Strange Interlude*, and Leah in *The Dybbuk*. She has triumphed on all three stages, grand opera, musical comedy, and high tragedy, and has one of the loveliest voices in existence. It is doubtful if at any time in the past the theatre has been able to boast so versatile an artist, who has proved herself second-to-none in three totally dissimilar worlds. Any writer of musical plays is lucky to live in the same age as so richly gifted an artist and to have his characters brought to life by her.

"If a character is written with a definite actor in view, the author usually produces a good part, even if it so happens that the artist who provides the inspiration does not eventually play the part. It is essentially 'actable.' Ellis Jeffreys proved it by running away with the part which I had written for Marie Tempest, at the same time teaming-up magnificently with Lilian Braithwaite.

"I insist that artists cast for my musical plays shall be able to sing, act and dance. They must be able, like Roma Beaumont, to do all three simultaneously and as naturally as if they behaved that way off-stage. As I neither sing nor dance in these musical productions, I write my own parts as if they were set in a straight play. If they are as sufficiently strong and convincing as a part in a straight play, they carry weight in a musical, without requiring singing or dancing to bolster them up.

"It is fascinating to go to plays and wonder what sort of parts could be written for artists one particularly admires. I think Fay Compton should have a part calling for the portrayal of infinite goodness of spirit and heart. When she plays unsympathetic women, such as Regina Giddens in *The Little Foxes*, she never seems at her

(Continued overleaf)

best. For Sonia Dresdel I would like to write a part of enormous temperament. The character would be capricious, wayward, very feminine, and gifted with a terrific sense of humour. I prefer writing for women. I have always been more interested in seeing a woman than a man on the stage. I find them more entertaining, and enjoy writing for them more than for men.

"Yet when I come to consider Laurence Olivier I wonder if I ought to qualify my statement. He is undoubtedly the giant of our generation. There is no actress on the stage to equal Olivier in artistic stature, unless it be Edith Evans. There is certainly no actress under forty who could match him as an artist. If I thought of writing a part for Olivier I would probably write one embracing all the things he can do so much better than I can . . . and then I might be tempted to play it myself!

"James, Duke of Monmouth, would make a magnificent vehicle for Olivier. It is astonishing that so colourful a figure has been so sadly neglected by dramatists. Born of Charles II and Lucy Walter in Rotterdam, he came to England after the Restoration, to be handsomely lodged in Hampton Court and in Whitehall. Though a poor, weak libertine, he became the idol of the populace. After the death of his father he instigated the rebellion that met with disaster at Sedgemoor, where he was found in a ditch, disguised as a shepherd. He was duly beheaded by James II on Tower Hill. Olivier is born to carry off such a part. Judge Jeffreys would be the Himmler of the piece. As a result of the insurrection he hanged over 300 rebels, transported more than 800 to the plantations, and had a number of others either fined or flogged. The period has always been popular with English playgoers. Think of the success of *And So To Bed* and *Sweet Nell of Old Drury*!

"The present boom in the theatre is not having a wholly beneficial effect upon playwrights. Theatres are packed every night; they are not rationed, and remain one of the few channels through which people can spend money as freely as they wish. The big successes in the West End sell out in no time for weeks ahead. On that account hundreds of other playgoers, who cannot make their arrangements until the last minute, have to take second choice and are compelled to patronise plays which would never attract capacity audiences in normal times.

"Those authors whose prime concern is making money are tempted to throw on mediocre plays, knowing full well that the theatre will be crowded anyway. It is not a question of the best play drawing the public, but the one which is lucky enough to find a theatre in the first instance. These are times when 'anything goes.' The boom is by no means an unmixed blessing. It can be a menace to fine writing."

Echoes from Broadway (Continued from page 28) vations and the limited eight week engagement is sure of moderate box office support. For this, the Guild will "reward" its followers with *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Another classic that has been removed from the shelf is Moliere's *The Would-be Gentleman*, which Bobby Clark has dusted off, freely adapted and turned into a vehicle for himself. Under these circumstances Moliere had to come out second best, for the funny little leering Bobby Clark, with the energy of all the Marx Brothers combined, and penchant for dressing up in ridiculous costumes was bound to turn Moliere's satire into a broad farce. The result is a thin evening for those who expect a play of any substance and a riotous one for the Clark devotees, who find any stunt that keeps their favourite funny man on all night a worthwhile one. So we get a series of sketches: "Bobby Clark and the Tailor," "Bobby Clark's Dancing Lesson," "Bobby Clark and the Sexy Countess," etc., any one of which would be fine in a musical, but the whole series is as forbidding as a double feature consisting of two Andy Hardy pictures. However, those who tire of the proceedings early are having fun watching some members of the audience double and triple up with laughter. Michael Todd's production is an extravagant one, with Howard Bay providing an ornate silver setting and Irene Sharaff many costumes.

Knowing very little of the life of Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, we approached Emmet Lavery's biographical drama *The Magnificent Yankee* with the hope of discovery and suspicion of its entertainment values, for the words "a jurist's life" can sound very stuffy and imposing. Mr. Lavery disappointed us on the discovery angle for he preferred to subordinate everything to the Justice's pleasant home life. We rarely see this great man's mind in action nor do we learn very much of his famous dissenting opinions, made during the years 1902 and 1933, which have so strongly influenced the American way of life. This period runs between the two Roosevelts, and of course other familiar names are mentioned and famous personages like Justice Brandeis and Owen Wister, author of "The Virginian," appear, but they shed little light on Holmes' brilliant career. His devotion to his wife, Fanny, and their full and apparently completely happy life together is what interests Mr. Lavery most.

Louis Calhern portrays Justice Holmes and he is decidedly at his best when he is nearing his nineties and his moustache is flowing and his hair pure white. It's an impressive performance of an old man, but the way Emmet Lavery wrote it, it might be any old man—say, C. Aubrey Smith. Dorothy Gish as his wife makes the transition more gracefully and is lovely, charming and feminine.

Whispers from the Wings

BY
LOOKER ON

THE present theatre boom is no asset to an actress attempting to return to the old unaided, after a spell in the Forces. Such was the first impression to strike Pauline Bentley, just demobilised after two-and-a-half years in the W.R.N.S., as she commenced picking up the threads of her old profession in the theatre.

She was not a star, but five years of intensive acting and intelligent stage-management at the Intimate, Arts and Westminster theatres found her comfortably established in West-End theatre circles at the time of her call-up. Judging by her recent experience, I gather the returning actress finds it more difficult to get re-established than the returning secretary.

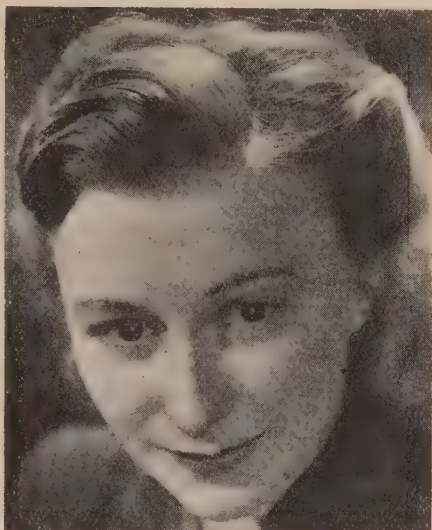
"The great thing," as Miss Bentley remarks, "is to get into circulation and be accepted again by members of the profession. In the theatre, even more than in commercial life, this is best achieved by getting a job, which is not easy, at any time, in the fluctuating show business. Managements come and go with the years. People who work together for the duration of a run may never meet again throughout their career, which is all so very different from the commercial world, where colleagues frequently work side by side for a lifetime, making personal contact so much easier when looking for work.

"The boom makes work difficult to find. A fair percentage of the profession is employed in productions enjoying long runs in London. Others can find no vacant theatre to which to appear. Frequently plays have successful try-out tours, only to be discontinued when they eventually reach London, because there is not so much as a gleam of hope for an empty theatre.

"Managers are most courteous and helpful to people coming out of the Services, but they naturally ask about recent experience. It interests them to know that an actress played Juliet in 1939, but they really want to know what she can do now, and not what she did in the past. But what chance has an actress to display her ability, with successes stubbornly monopolising the stage of every theatre in Town?

"The actress has no 'rights' when she enters the stage door. No employer is compelled to take her back, as happens with girls from the Civil Service and certain big business combines. Nor was her salary 'made-up' during her period in the forces, when she had to live entirely on service pay. Now she stands alone and has to start life all over again.

"Even two years in uniform is long enough to obliterate from the managerial mind all memory of any artist who had no pretence to stardom when called-up. Two years of regimentation is enough to cause



PAULINE BENTLEY *John Vickers*

any girl to lose confidence when she has to start coping with the business side of her profession again. When for two years she has not been allowed to think for herself, it is not easy to be faced with the 'problem of 'selling her assets' in the show-business, where so much depends on personality.

"At a moment when many artists must have been on the point of losing heart, William Fox came home from Bagdad with his inspired conception of the Reunion Theatre Association to help theatre people coming out of the Services to regain contact with their former employment.

"This organisation is only interested in ex-Service men and women. They have held auditions in the West-End to ascertain the exact capabilities of every artist coming out of the Forces. These artists all know they are sure of sympathetic consideration. The Association has active plans to put on their own productions, cast exclusively with ex-Service artists and back-stage staff. One of these will be *And No Birds Sing* (by Jenny Laird and John Fernald), to be produced at the Green Room Rag (Comedy Theatre), on March 17th. Another will be *The Noose*, a new play by Richard Llewellyn. The Arts Council has stepped in to arrange tours of plays cast from Association members, with a view to covering South Wales, where it is hoped to establish two or three permanent repertory companies.

"Such a helping hand was sorely needed by the bewildered actress looking for a chance to feel her feet in a world that is the same, yet so strangely different."

Cinderella (Continued from 22)

serving its fantastic colour, was filled in with a psychological and lyrical content. In Prokofiev's music this found expression in a profoundly moving adagio, in the sweeping melodies of waltzes and in a concluding amoroso.

"Having found the pivot of the scenario, I endeavoured to work out all the interwoven lines of the ballet. The world of legend was embodied in the beggar-fairies and the seasons of the year, who clothed the drudge for the ball. The twelve dwarfs who emerged from the clock case at midnight symbolised the fatal hour. The stepmother and her daughters conveyed the atmosphere of gilded, vulgar wealth. The etiquette of the Court was suggested in the slow, somewhat formal, dances. *In our treatment of the prince, we made him circle the whole world in the course of a night, trying the glass slipper on the maidens of Andalusia, tropical islands, and the East. The prince tries the slipper on everyone except Cinderella. He finds her at last when by accident she lets the second slipper fall from her dirty apron. By this small detail we wanted to show how in search of their ideal, people often pass by their own 'princesses.'

"Sergei Prokofiev was attracted by the subject and I remember how enthusiastically we worked on our ballet in autumn, 1943, in the cold Ural town of Molotov, where the composer was living at the time. Whenever some satisfactory image had been found in the text Prokofiev's musical fantasy was stimulated and the text interpreted in dances, variations, in some curiously grotesque combination of sound or in a flowing melody.

"Thus, as the result of a great deal of co-operative work, the new three-act ballet which has been given such a rich and fantastic form, with its decorative colourful settings by the artist Peter Williams, with its series of memorable and clear-cut mises-en-scenes arranged by that resourceful ballet master, Rostislav Zakharov, has been staged at the Bolshoi Theatre. Full justice to Prokofiev's music was done by the splendid orchestra conducted by Yuri Faier, an enthusiast of ballet music. He conducted this difficult score from memory. Both the ballerinas who took the part of

Cinderella—Ulanova and Lepeshinskaya—created their own interpretations of the legendary heroine.

"Ulanova is a poet of the dance. Her Cinderella is expressive in every line of the body, every movement of the head. Her dancing is a song without words, in which everything can be understood with perfect clearness. Ulanova's Cinderella does not tempt you to follow closely the dancer's technique. Her virtuosity is somehow taken for granted, like details that belong to the whole. The sum of this is the poetic character of the poor girl, as unassuming in her exterior as she is noble in her striving towards good, love, truth and beauty. The charm of this image in Ulanova's interpretation is unforgettable.

"Lepeshinskaya's Cinderella is fascinating, light, aerial, brilliant in technique, in the purity and finish of movement. The image suggested by this ballerina is appealing and truthful, though to a certain degree simplified and conventionalised in comparison with the image created by Ulanova. But Lepeshinskaya is very temperamental and impetuous, and her mime in dramatic scenes is excellent.

"Victorina Krieger, in the role of the stepmother, gives a memorable performance. The Prince is danced by Gabovich and Preobrazhensky, whose technique and art as partners is of unusually high quality.

"As always, the vast corps-de-ballet dances with wonderful harmony and grace, especially in the picturesque fairy tale scenes. All is subordinated to the composer's ideas, to the expression of his poignant and poetic music.

"At the present time the ballet is being rehearsed in Leningrad, at the Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet. There is no doubt that the producers and dancers of this famous ballet theatre will introduce their own new colours and shades of meaning into this work. It will be produced by one of the best dancers in this country, the ballet-master Konstantine Sergeev. The settings are by Boris Erdman, who has much experience in this field."

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Amateur Stage

EVIDENCE accumulates from the post that peace is restoring much amateur activity suspended during the war. Reports of productions flow in, and last month the Scala welcomed an amateur performance, so one of our London playhouses is restored to us. There is an extraordinary general meeting of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association in Manchester on March 2, from which a strengthening of interest in the musical north may be expected. A number of provincial groups mention with justifiable pleasure the de-requisitioning of their local halls and other buildings, so providing them with the playhouses from which they have been too long divorced. It is quite certain the 1946-47 season will be one of widespread activity—how much of it will be worth while? How many groups will devote their enthusiasm and skill to the furtherance of a definite policy? The pre-war legitimate criticism of so much amateur work, that it was aimless and meaningless, should not apply in the years to come if we can discriminate between good grain and empty husk.

The Royal College of Art Theatre Group announce the return of the College to South Kensington from Ambleside after five years exile. So their long-planned production of *The Duchess of Malfi* will now take place in the Students' Common Room, Queen's Gate, on March 5-8 at 7 p.m.

Queen Mary College Dramatic Society are presenting *She Stoops to Conquer* at Toynbee Hall, E.1, on March 14-16 at 7 p.m.

One-act plays are the choice of The Vagabonds, of Pinner, on March 22, 23, 29, 30. *Fumed Oak*, *Matrimonial Openings*, *Merry-Go-Round* and *When the Whirlwind Blows* should help to "alleviate the prejudice that one-act plays are not a reasonable proposition and give younger talent a chance."

The Playmakers are a company of travelling players, who have recently given scenes from *Othello*, playing for 75 minutes, using self-designed costumes and a special back-cloth and simple furniture easily transportable. They have a triple bill in preparation, and will welcome new members. Write or phone to Eleanor Bishop, 44, Chevington Road, Hanwell, W.7 (Ealing 4879).

From the same area Ad Astra reports its activity with new musical and dramatic work, a new play, *Wild Wind*, being in rehearsal. A fantasy is in preparation, in which the music and poetry of five centuries will be blended with a dramatic theme. Nora Swinburne is one of the honorary members who will help in its production. Ad Astra includes social activities, and new members are welcomed. Write to the Hon. Secretary, 6 Queen's Road, Ealing, W.5.

Walthamstow Educational Settlement

(Continued on "acting page")

Hair Beauty

WOMAN'S 'crowning glory'—a beautiful head of hair—has been a major problem during the past few years. Most women, not least, of course, stage and film actresses, have had the greatest difficulty in keeping their hair at its best because of the shortness of supplies of well known and reliable shampoos and other aids to hair beauty.

The problem of supplies has been a major one too for the Evan Williams Co., Ltd., whose products have such a wide reputation among those who know that healthy and luxuriant hair is one of the first essentials of an attractive appearance. There is every hope, however, that supplies will begin to increase, though it is well to remember that certain controlled sales must reach hairdressers on the quota system and are quickly snapped up. It is therefore advisable to have one's name registered for all treatment shampoos, such as Tunisian Henna, etc.

Here is a reminder of some of the excellent Evan Williams' products, which in spite of the export drive, should now be available in increasing quantities, especially if the manufacturers are now moving back to their own factory, where full production will quickly become possible:

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Amateur Stage (Continued)

is a Drama School which gives opportunities for varied experience to amateurs. Classes for beginners or more advanced students lead to actual productions. February productions included an evening of one-act plays at Cripplegate by the London Federation of Boys' Clubs and London Union of Girls' Clubs; Gilbert Murray's translation of Menander's *The Cypriote* by the Questors of Ealing; *The Circle* by Northern Polytechnic Repertory, who will do *Autumn Crocus* on March 1st.

The Incognito Amateur Dramatic Society presented a new play, *Gall and Honey*, by Michael Fyodorov, at the Church House, Cripplegate, on February 19th. Messrs. Samuel French Ltd. announce the ease for amateurs of *Acacia Avenue*, *Ten Little Niggers*, and *Mr. Bolfray*, with *This Happy Breed* available from April 25.

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grandeur, tinged with sardonic humour, that "lifted" the performance practically out of the theatre and into the Market outside Covent Garden even is scarcely big enough for this personality.

Moira Shearer, Anne Negus, Gillian Lynne and Margaret Dale danced their difficult but beautiful variations in the Prologue superbly, in particular the last-named, whose "Finger" variation had dazzling balance and attack, and who also gave the White Cat an amusing touch of the *ballerina assoluta*. Pamela May and Alexis Rassinne as the Blue Birds danced below their best form, although apart from Helpmann's perfectly controlled pirouettes in the second act Court dance and some first-rate character dancing by Harold Turner and Gordon Hamilton (the Company unfortunately lacks a third Ivan of like *brio*) Rassinne's was the only notable male dancing of the evening. As the Fairy of the Lilac Beryl Grey presided with the graciousness and dignity of the true ballerina: both her miming and dancing were of the highest quality.

The revival is staged with a magnificence not surpassed by Russian Ballet performances in this country. The elaborate costumes for the Waltz mask the pattern of the dance just as Margot Fonteyn's head-dress in Act I tends to cut the line of her neck; but for the beauty and fantasy of Oliver Messel's designs generally, and the classic spaciousness of his settings, no praise can be too high. The excellent new orchestra, under Constant Lambert, gave full richness and glow to Tchaikovsky's score.

BALLET EXHIBITION AT NEWCASTLE

AN event of particular interest to balletgoers is the presentation, at the City Art Gallery Newcastle, for a period of four weeks commencing March 23rd, of a Ballet Exhibition which will probably be the most comprehensive ever presented in this country. Among the exhibits will be original designs, programmes, photographs and relics, together with displays lent by the International Archives de la Danse, Paris, Dance Archives, New York, the London Archives of the Dance, the Royal Academy of Dancing and the Soviet Ballet. The Exhibition has been organised for the Theatre Royal Galleries Club, and its secretary, Keith Henley, by G.B.L. Wilson, the ballet photographer and organiser of the recent Arts Council "Synopsis of Ballet" Exhibition which successfully toured the provinces. Admission will be free, and a special catalogue is in course of publication.

MANCHESTER BALLET CLUB

A most successful season of ballet was held on February 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th, at the Queen's Hall, Manchester, and the Manchester Ballet Club are certainly to be congratulated on the work they are doing to foster the love of ballet in their area. The programme consisted of *Serenade* (music, Mozart; choreography, Helen Bird); *Blythwood* (a study in movement and design); *Les Destinées* (music, Liszt; choreography, Margaret Pritchard); *Legend* (music, Benjamin Britten; choreography, Helen Bird); *Music Hall* (music arranged by William Giles; choreography, Marion Dunkley); and *Divertissement*.

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